



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Rowland State Government Center, 55 West Main Street, Waterbury, CT 06702-2004  
<http://dmvct.org>



*Testimony of the Department of Motor Vehicles  
Program Review & Investigations Committee and  
Transportation Committee Joint Public Hearing  
February 20, 2009*

### **S.B. No. 902**

#### **AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE SAFETY OF TAXICABS AND LIVERY VEHICLES**

### **S.B. No. 903**

#### **AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM REVIEW AND INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE ECONOMIC REGULATION OF TAXICABS AND LIVERY VEHICLES**

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the two proposals raised as a result of Program Review and Investigations' recent study and report on *Taxicab and Livery Vehicle Regulation*.

As committee members are aware, DMV's responsibilities in these areas are limited to two primary functions: licensure of taxi and livery drivers and registration of their vehicles. Responsibility for the inspection of these vehicles is shared between the Department of Transportation (DOT) and DMV.

While some of the proposed changes are "doable", or are already being done, Senate Bill 902 expands DMV's inspection mandate to include all newly registered livery vehicles. It further requires DMV to partner with DOT on the unannounced quarterly inspection of taxicabs and the unannounced annual inspection of livery vehicles. These provisions, if implemented without adequate funding and resources, could have a significant impact on the Department's existing commercial vehicle safety programs.

To give you an idea using the Study's numbers of 963 registered taxis and 1,651 registered livery vehicles: if half of each fleet were to be inspected annually in the joint DOT/DMV inspections, an additional 1,300 inspections per year would be completed. Coupled with the inspection of newly registered livery vehicles mandated by this proposal, DMV would require at least two additional inspectors to perform these duties.

Another program expansion included in Senate Bill 902 would require livery vehicles to undergo biennial safety inspections conducted by authorized dealers or repairers. The bill would prohibit DMV from renewing their registrations unless the "biennial inspection

reports have been submitted to the commissioner". Although there are several classes of motor vehicles that must submit inspection results as a condition of registration renewal, DMV would caution against this practice of linking the two. This Department is working more and more towards an online registration renewal process (which currently exists for "clean" passenger renewals) and mandating that inspection reports be submitted at the time of, and as a condition for, renewal processing would preclude us from taking this step forward. It is the Department's belief that it would be most efficient to include inspection reporting as a component of business regulation and not motor vehicle registration.

One technical revision to SB 902 should be pointed out. The bill codifies existing DMV practice of providing reports to taxi and livery companies, as well as other affected businesses, that list individuals holding a public service license, but, whose license or any endorsement has been suspended, withdrawn or revoked. The Department currently provides these companies online access to this information, and line 279 should be revised to specify that it is the commissioner of motor vehicles responsible for compiling this information.

The only provision included in Senate Bill 503 that impacts the Department of Motor Vehicles is included in section 5 and requires DMV to issue a special plate to differentiate medical livery from the broader livery category. Aside from our system limitations which make adding a new registration category very complex and time-consuming, staff is unclear as to whether creation of this plate is a practical solution if vehicles used for medical livery may also be used, at other times, for regular fares. For example, under existing statute, livery companies may transport school children and are required to display clear signage indicating that they are "carrying school children". They are not, however, required to put a *student transportation vehicle* plate on their vehicle, as it may be used for other purposes as well. If this is an area that the Committees would like to pursue, DMV would like the opportunity to work with you on an efficient, effective initiative that may involve placarding, as opposed to plating.

DMV appreciates the interest in improving the regulation, safety and oversight of the taxi and livery industries, and looks forward to working with the Legislature, as well as our sister agencies, on this issue.